TWO HUNDRED AND THIRD THOUSAND

THE WAR

IT'S CAUSES AND IT'S MESSAGE

SPEECHES

DELIVERED BY

THE PRIME MINISTER

August - October 1914

DEDICATED TO

THE KING

By His Majesty's Gracious Permission

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1914

FIFTH EDITION

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A Speech in the House of Commons 6th August, 1914

In support of the Motion for a Vote of Credit of £100,000,000

IN asking the House to agree to the resolution which Mr. Speaker has just read from the Chair, I do not propose, because I do not think it is in any way necessary, to traverse the ground again which was covered by my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary two or three nights ago. He stated—and I do not think any of the statements he made are capable of answer and certainly have not yet been answered—the grounds upon which with the utmost reluctance and with infinite regret His Majesty's Government have been compelled to put this country in a state of war with what for many years and indeed generations past has been a friendly Power. But, Sir, the papers which have since been presented to Parliament, and which are now in the hands of hon. Members, will, I think, show how strenuous, how unremitting, how persistent, even when the last glimmer of hope seemed to have faded away, were the efforts of my right hon. Friend to secure for Europe an honourable and a lasting peace. Everyone knows in the great crisis which occurred last year in the East of Europe, it was largely, if not mainly, by the acknowledgment of all Europe due to the steps taken by my right hon. Friend that the area of the conflict was limited, and that so far as the Great Powers are concerned, peace was maintained. If his efforts upon this occasion have, unhappily, been less successful, I am certain that this House and the country, and I will add posterity and history, will accord to him what is, after all, the best tribute that can be paid to any statesman : that, never derogating for an instant or by an inch from the honour and interests of his own country, he has striven, as few men have striven, to maintain and preserve the greatest interest of all countries—universal peace. These papers which are now in the hands of hon. Members show something more than that. They show what were the terms which were offered to us in exchange for our

neutrality. I trust that not only the Members of this House, but all our fellow-subjects everywhere will read the communications, will read, learn, and mark the communications which passed only a week ago to-day between Berlin and London in this matter. The terms by which it was sought to buy our neutrality are contained in the communication made by the German Chancellor to Sir Edward Goschen on the 29th July, No. 85 of the published Paper. I think I must refer to them for a moment. After referring to the state of things as between Austria and Russia, Sir Edward Goschen goes on :—

> "He then proceeded to make the following strong bid for British neutrality. He said that it was clear, so far as he was able to judge the main principle which governed British policy, that Great Britain would never stand by and allow France to be crushed in any conflict there might be. That, however, was not the object at which Germany aimed. Provided that neutrality of Great Britain were certain, every assurance would be given to the British Government that the Imperial Government "——

Let the House observe these words—

> "aimed at no territorial acquisition at the expense of France should they prove victorious in any war that might ensue."

Sir Edward Goschen proceeded to put a very pertinent question :—

> "I questioned His Excellency about the French Colonies "——

What are the French Colonies? They mean every part of the dominions and possessions of France outside the geographical area of Europe—

> "and he said that he was unable to give a similar undertaking in that respect."

Let me come to what, in my mind personally, has always been the crucial and almost the governing consideration, namely, the position of the small States :—

> "As regards Holland, however, His Excellency said that so long as Germany's adversaries respected the integrity and neutrality of the Netherlands Germany was ready to give His Majesty's Government an assurance that she would do likewise."

Then we come to Belgium :—

> "It depended upon the action of France what operations Germany might be forced to enter upon in Belgium, but, when the war was over, Belgian integrity would be respected if she had not sided against Germany."

Let the House observe the distinction between these two cases. In regard to Holland it was not only independence and integrity but also neutrality ; but in regard to Belgium, there was no mention of neutrality at all, nothing but an assurance that after the war came to an end the integrity of Belgium would be respected. Then His Excellency added :—

> "Ever since he had been Chancellor the object of his policy had been to bring about an understanding with England. He trusted that these assurances "——

the assurances I have read out to the House—

> "might form the basis of that understanding which he so much desired."

What does that amount to? Let me just ask the House. I do so, not with the object of inflaming passion, certainly not with the object of exciting feeling against Germany, but I do so to vindicate and make clear the position of the British Government in this matter. What did that proposal amount to? In the first place, it meant this: That behind the back of France—they were not made a party to these communications—we should have given, if we had assented to that, a free licence to Germany to annex, in the event of a successful war, the whole of the extra European dominions and possessions of France. What did it mean as regards Belgium? When she addressed, as she has addressed in these last few days, her moving appeal to us to fulfil our solemn guarantee of her neutrality, what reply should we have given? What reply should we have given to that Belgian appeal? We should have been obliged to say that without her knowledge we had bartered away to the Power threatening her our obligation to keep our plighted word. The House has read, and the country has read, of course, in the last few hours, the most pathetic appeal addressed by the King of Belgium, and I do not envy the man who can read that appeal with an unmoved heart. Belgians are fighting and losing their lives. What would have been the position of Great Britain to-day in the face of that spectacle if we had assented to this infamous proposal? Yes, and what are we to get in return for the betrayal of our friends and the dishonour of our obligations? What are we to get in return? A promise—nothing more; a promise as to what Germany would do in certain eventualities; a promise, be it observed—I am sorry to have to say it, but it must be put upon record—given by a Power which was at that very moment announcing its intention to violate its own treaty and inviting us to do the same. I can only say, if we had dallied or temporised, we, as a Government, should have covered ourselves with dishonour, and we should have betrayed the interests of this country, of which we are trustees. I am glad, and I think the country will be glad, to turn to the reply which my right hon. Friend made, and of which I will read to the House two of the more salient passages. This document, No. 101 of the White Paper, puts on record a week ago the attitude of the British Government, and, as I believe, of the British people. My right hon. Friend says:—

> "His Majesty's Government cannot for a moment entertain the Chancellor's proposal that they should bind themselves to neutrality on such terms. What he asks us in effect is to engage to stand by while French Colonies are taken if France is beaten, so long as Germany does not take French territory as distinct from the Colonies. From the material point of view"——

My right hon. Friend, as he always does, used very temperate language :—

> "such a proposal is unacceptable, for France, without further territory in Europe being taken from her, could be so crushed as to lose her position as a Great Power, and become subordinate to German policy."

That is the material aspect. But he proceeded :—

> "Altogether, apart from that, it would be a disgrace for us to make this bargain with Germany at the expense of France, a disgrace from which the good name of this country would never recover. The Chancellor also in effect asks us to bargain away whatever obligation or interest we have as regards the neutrality of Belgium. We could not entertain that bargain either."

He then says :—

> "We must preserve our full freedom to act, as circumstances may seem to us to require."

And he added, I think, in sentences which the House will appreciate :—

> "You should . . . add most earnestly that the one way of maintaining the good relations between England and Germany is that they should continue to work together to preserve the peace of Europe. . . . For that object this Government will work in that way with all sincerity and goodwill.
>
> "If the peace of Europe can be preserved and the present crisis safely passed, my own endeavour will be to promote some arrangement to which Germany could be a party, by which she could be assured that no aggressive or hostile policy would be pursued against her or her allies by France, Russia, and ourselves, jointly or separately. I have desired this and worked for it "——

The statement was never more true—

> "as far as I could, through the last Balkan crisis, and Germany having a corresponding object, our relations sensibly improved. The idea has hitherto been too Utopian to form the subject of definite proposals, but if this present crisis, so much more acute than any that Europe has gone through for generations, be safely passed, I am hopeful that the relief and reaction which will follow may make possible some more definite *rapprochement* between the Powers than has been possible hitherto."

That document, in my opinion, states clearly, in temperate and convincing language, the attitude of this Government. Can any one who reads it fail to appreciate the tone of obvious sincerity and earnestness which underlies it? Can any one honestly doubt that the Government of this country in spite of great provocation—and I regard the proposals made to us as proposals which we might have thrown aside without consideration and almost without answer—can any one doubt that in spite of great provocation the right hon. Gentleman, who had already earned the title—and no one ever more deserved it—of Peace Maker of Europe, persisted to the very last moment of the last hour in that beneficent but unhappily frustrated purpose? I am entitled to say, and I do so on behalf of this country—I speak not for a party, I speak for the country as a whole—that we made every

effort any Government could possibly make for peace. But this war has been forced upon us. What is it we are fighting for? Everyone knows, and no one knows better than the Government, the terrible, incalculable suffering, economic, social, personal, and political, which war, and especially a war between the Great Powers of the world, must entail. There is no man amongst us sitting upon this bench in these trying days—more trying perhaps than any body of statesmen for a hundred years have had to pass through—there is not a man amongst us who has not, during the whole of that time, had clearly before his vision the almost unequalled suffering which war, even in a just cause, must bring about, not only to the peoples who are for the moment living in this country and in the other countries of the world, but to posterity and to the whole prospects of European civilisation. Every step we took we took with that vision before our eyes, and with a sense of responsibility which it is impossible to describe. Unhappily, if in spite of all our efforts to keep the peace, and with that full and overpowering consciousness of the result if the issue were decided in favour of war, we have, nevertheless, thought it to be the duty as well as the interest of this country, to go to war, the House may be well assured it was because we believe, and I am certain the country will believe, that we are unsheathing our sword in a just cause.

If I am asked what we are fighting for I reply in two sentences. In the first place to fulfil a solemn international obligation, an obligation which, if it had been entered into between private persons in the ordinary concerns of life, would have been regarded as an obligation not only of law but of honour, which no self-respecting man could possibly have repudiated. I say, secondly, we are fighting to vindicate the principle which, in these days when force, material force, sometimes seems to be the dominant influence and factor in the development of mankind, we are fighting to vindicate the principle that small nationalities are not to be crushed, in defiance of international good fait' , by the arbitrary will of a strong and overmastering Power. I do not believe any nation ever entered into a great controversy—and this is one of the greatest history will ever know—with a clearer conscience and stronger conviction that it is fighting, not for aggression, not for the maintenance of its own selfish interest, but that it is fighting in defence of principles, the maintenance of which is vital to the civilisation of the world. With a full conviction, not only of the wisdom and justice of our cause, but of the obligations which lay upon us to challenge this great issue, we are entering into the struggle. Let us now make sure that all the resources, not only of this United Kingdom, but of the vast Empire of which it is the centre, shall be thrown into the scale, and it is that this object may be adequately secured, that I am now about to ask this Committee—to make the very un-

usual demand upon it—to give the Government a Vote of Credit of £100,000,000. I am not going, and I am sure the Committee do not wish it, into the technical distinctions between Votes of Credit and Supplementary Estimates and all the rarities and refinements which arise in that connection. There is a much higher point of view than that. If it were necessary, I could justify, upon purely technical grounds, the course we propose to adopt, but I am not going to do so, because I think it would be foreign to the temper and disposition of the Committee. There is one thing to which I do call attention, that is, the Title and Heading of the Bill. As a rule, in the past Votes of this kind have been taken simply for naval and military operations, but we have thought it right to ask the Committee to give us its confidence in the extension of the traditional area of Votes of Credit so that this money which we are asking them to allow us to expend may be applied not only for strictly naval and military operations, but to assist the food supplies, promote the continuance of trade, industry, business, and communications, whether by means of insurance or indemnity against risk or otherwise, for the relief of distress, and generally for all expenses arising out of the existence of a state of war. I believe the Committee will agree with us that it was wise to extend the area of the Vote of Credit so as to include all these various matters. It gives the Government a free hand. Of course, the Treasury will account for it, and any expenditure that takes place will be subject to the approval of the House. I think it would be a great pity—in fact, a great disaster—if, in a crisis of this magnitude, we were not enabled to make provision—provision far more needed now than it was under the simpler conditions that prevailed in the old days—for all the various ramifications and developments of expenditure which the existence of a state of war between the Great Powers of Europe must entail on any one of them.

I am asking also in my character of Secretary of State for War—a position which I held until this morning—for a Supplementary Estimate for men for the Army. Perhaps the Committee will allow me for a moment just to say on that personal matter that I took upon myself the office of Secretary of State for War under conditions upon which I need not go back but which are fresh in the minds of everyone, in the hope and with the object that the condition of things in the Army, which all of us deplored, might speedily be brought to an end and complete confidence re-established. I believe that is the case; in fact, I know it to be. There is no more loyal and united body, no body in which the spirit and habit of discipline are more deeply ingrained and cherished than in the British Army. Glad as I should have been to continue the work of that office, and I would have done so under normal conditions, it would not be fair to the Army, it would not be just to the country, that any Minister

should divide his attention between that Department and another, still less that the First Minister of the Crown, who has to look into the affairs of all departments and who is ultimately responsible for the whole policy of the Cabinet, should give, as he could only give, perfunctory attention to the affairs of our Army in a great war. I am very glad to say that a very distinguished soldier and administrator, in the person of Lord Kitchener, with that great public spirit and patriotism that everyone would expect from him, at my request stepped into the breach. Lord Kitchener, as everyone knows, is not a politician. His association with the Government as a Member of the Cabinet for this purpose must not be taken as in any way identifying him with any set of political opinions. He has, at a great public emergency, responded to a great public call, and I am certain he will have with him, in the discharge of one of the most arduous tasks that has ever fallen upon a Minister, the complete confidence of all parties and all opinions.

I am asking on his behalf for the Army, power to increase the number of men of all ranks, in addition to the number already voted, by no less than 500,000. I am certain the Committee will not refuse its sanction, for we are encouraged to ask for it not only by our own sense of the gravity and the necessities of the case, but by the knowledge that India is prepared to send us certainly two Divisions, and that every one of our self-governing Dominions, spontaneously and unasked, has already tendered to the utmost limits of their possibilities, both in men and in money, every help they can afford to the Empire in a moment of need. Sir, the Mother Country must set the example, while she responds with gratitude and affection to those filial overtures from the outlying members of her family.

Sir, I will say no more. This is not an occasion for controversial discussion. In all that I have said, I believe I have not gone, either in the statement of our case or in my general description of the provision we think it necessary to make, beyond the strict bounds of truth. It is not my purpose—it is not the purpose of any patriotic man—to inflame feeling, to indulge in rhetoric, to excite international animosities. The occasion is far too grave for that. We have a great duty to perform, we have a great trust to fulfil, and confidently we believe that Parliament and the country will enable us to do it.

A Speech in the House of Commons 27th August, 1914

I BEG to move, "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty praying Him to convey to His Majesty the King of the Belgians the sympathy and admiration with which this House regards the heroic resistance offered by his army and people to the wanton invasion of his territory, and an assurance of the determination of this Country to support in every way the efforts of Belgium to vindicate her own independence and the public law of Europe."

Very few words are needed to commend to the House the Address, the terms of which will shortly be read from the Chair. The War which is now shaking to its foundations the whole European system originated in a quarrel in which this country had no direct concern. We strove with all our might, as every-one now knows, to prevent its outbreak, and when that was no longer possible, to limit its area. It is all important, and I think it is relevant to this Motion, that it should be clearly understood when it was and why it was that we intervened. It was only when we were confronted with the choice between keeping and breaking solemn obligations, between the discharge of a binding trust and of shameless subservience to naked force, that we threw away the scabbard. We do not repent our decision. The issue was one which no great and self-respecting nation, certainly none bred and nurtured like ourselves, in this ancient home of liberty, could, without undying shame, have declined. We were bound by our obligations, plain and paramount, to assert and maintain the threatened independence of a small and neutral State. Belgium had no interests of her own to serve, save and except the one supreme and over-riding interest of every State, great or little, which is worthy of the name, the preservation of her integrity and of her national life.

History tells us that the duty of asserting and maintaining that great principle—which is, after all, the well-spring of civilisation and of progress—has fallen once and again, at the most critical moments in the past, to States relatively small in area and in population, but great in courage, and in resolve—to Athens and Sparta, to the Swiss Cantons, and, not least gloriously, three centuries ago, to the Netherlands. Never, Sir, I venture to assert, has the duty been more clearly and bravely acknowledged, and never has it been more strenuously and heroically discharged, than during the last weeks by the Belgian King and the Belgian people. They have faced without flinching, and against almost incalculable odds, the horrors of irruption, of devastation, of spoliation, and of outrage. They have stubbornly withstood, and successfully arrested, the inrush, wave after wave, of a gigantic and overwhelming force. The defence of Liège will always be the theme of one of the most inspiring chapters in the annals of liberty. The Belgians have won for themselves the immortal glory which belongs to a people who prefer freedom to ease, to security, even to life itself. We are proud of their alliance and their friendship. We salute them with respect and with honour. We are with them heart and soul, because by their side and in their company we are defending at the same time two great causes—the independence of small States and the sanctity of international covenants. We assure them—as I ask the House in this Address to do—we assure them to-day, in the name of this United Kingdom and of the whole Empire, that they may count to the end on our whole-hearted and unfailing support.

A Letter Addressed to the Lord Mayor of London, the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, the Lord Mayor of Dublin, and the Lord Mayor of Cardiff, 28th August, 1914

My Lords,

The time has come for combined effort to stimulate and organise public opinion and public effort in the greatest conflict in which our people has ever been engaged.

No one who can contribute anything to the accomplishment of this supremely urgent task is justified in standing aside.

I propose, as a first step, that meetings should be held without delay, not only in our great centres of population and industry, but in every district, urban and rural, throughout the United Kingdom, at which the justice of our cause should be made plain, and the duty of every man to do his part should be enforced.

I venture to suggest to your lordships that the four principal cities, over which you respectively preside, should lead the way.

I am ready myself, so far as the exigencies of public duty permit, to render such help as I can, and I should be glad, with that object, to address my fellow-subjects in your cities.

I have reason to know that I can count upon the co-operation of the leaders of every section of organised political opinion.

Your faithful servant,

H. H. Asquith.

A Speech at the Guildhall 4th September, 1914

MY LORD MAYOR and citizens of London, it is three and a half years since I last had the honour of addressing in this hall a gathering of the citizens. We were then meeting under the presidency of one of your predecessors men of all creeds and parties, to celebrate and approve the joint declaration of the two great English-speaking States that for the future any differences between them should be settled, if not by agreement, at least by judicial inquiry and arbitration, and never in any circumstances by war. Those of us who hailed that great eirenicon between the United States and ourselves as a landmark on the road of progress were not sanguine enough to think, or even to hope, that the era of war was drawing to a close. But still less were we prepared to anticipate the terrible spectacle which now confronts us—a contest, which for the number and importance of the Powers engaged, the scale of their armaments and armies, the width of the theatre of conflict, the outpouring of blood and loss of life, the incalculable toll of suffering levied upon non-combatants, the material and moral loss accumulating day by day to the higher interests of civilised mankind—a contest which in every one of these aspects is without precedent in the annals of the world. We were very confident three years ago in the rightness of our position when we welcomed the new securities for peace. We are equally confident in it to-day, when reluctantly, and against our will, but with clear judgment and a clean conscience, we find ourselves involved with the whole strength of our Empire in this bloody arbitrament between might and right. The issue has passed out of the domain of argument into another field. But let me ask you, and through you the world outside, what would have been our condition as a nation

to-day, if through timidity, or through a perverted calculation of self-interest, or through a paralysis of the sense of honour and duty, we had been base enough to be false to our word, and faithless to our friends? Our eyes would have been turned at this moment with those of the whole civilised world to Belgium, a small State which has lived for more than seventy years under a several and collective guarantee, to which we, in common with Prussia and Austria, were parties. We should have seen, at the instance and by the action of two of those guaranteeing Powers, her neutrality violated, her independence strangled, her territory made use of as affording the easiest and most convenient road to a war of unprovoked aggression against France. We, the British people, should at this moment have been standing by, with folded arms and with such countenance as we could command, while this small and unprotected State, in defence of her vital liberties, made a heroic stand against overweening and overwhelming force. We should have been admiring as detached spectators the siege of Liége, the steady and manful resistance of a small army, the occupation of Brussels with all its splendid traditions and memories, the gradual forcing back of the patriotic defenders of their fatherland to the ramparts of Antwerp, countless outrages suffered by them, buccaneering levies exacted from the unoffending civil population, and, finally, the greatest crime committed against civilisation and culture since the Thirty Years War, the sack of Louvain, with its buildings, its pictures, its unique library, its unrivalled associations, a shameless holocaust of irreparable treasures, lit up by blind barbarian vengeance. What account could we, the Government and the people of this country, have been able to render to the tribunal of our national conscience and sense of honour, if, in defiance of our plighted and solemn obligations, we had endured, and had not done our best to prevent, yes, to avenge, these intolerable wrongs? For my part, I say that sooner than be a silent witness, which means in effect a willing accomplice, to this tragic triumph of force over law, and of brutality over freedom, I would see this country of ours blotted out of the pages of history.

That is only a phase, a lurid and illuminating phase, in the contest into which we have been called by the mandate of duty and of honour to bear our part. The cynical violation of the neutrality of Belgium was not the whole, but a step, a first step, in a deliberate policy of which, if not the immediate, the ultimate and not far distant aim was to crush the independence and the autonomy of the Free States of Europe. First Belgium, then Holland and Switzerland, countries like our own, imbued and sustained with the spirit of liberty, were, one after another, to be bent to the yoke. And these ambitions were fed and fostered by a body of new doctrine, a new philosophy, preached by professors and learned men. The free and full self-development which to

these small States, to ourselves, to our great and growing Dominions over the seas, to our kinsmen across the Atlantic, is the well-spring and life-breath of national existence, that free self-development is the one capital offence in the code of those who have made force their supreme divinity, and upon its altars they are prepared to sacrifice both the garnered fruits and the potential germs of the unfettered human spirit. I use this language advisedly.

This is not merely a material, it is also a spiritual conflict. Upon its issue everything that contains the promise of hope, that leads to emancipation and a fuller liberty for the millions who make up the mass of mankind, will be found sooner or later to depend.

Let me now turn for a moment to the actual situation in Europe. How do we stand? For the last ten years by what I believe to be happy and well-considered diplomatic arrangements we have established friendly and increasingly intimate relations with the two Powers, France and Russia, with whom in days gone by we have had in various parts of the world occasion for constant friction, and now and again for possible conflict. These new and better relations, based in the first instance upon business principles of give and take, matured into a settled temper of confidence and goodwill. They were never in any sense or at any time, as I have frequently stated in this hall, directed against other Powers.

No man in the history of mankind has ever laboured more strenuously or more successfully than my right hon. friend Sir Edward Grey for that which is the supreme interest of the modern world—a general and abiding peace. It is, I venture to think, a very superficial criticism which suggests that under his guidance the policy of this country has ignored, still less that it has counteracted and hampered, the Concert of Europe. It is little more than a year ago when, under the stress and strain of the Balkan crisis, the Ambassadors of the Great Powers met here day after day and week after week, curtailing the area of possible differences, reconciling warring ambitions and aims, and preserving against almost incalculable odds the general harmony, and it was in the same spirit and with the same purpose when a few weeks ago Austria delivered her ultimatum to Servia that the Foreign Secretary—for it was he—put forward the proposal for a mediating conference between the four Powers not directly concerned—Germany, France, Italy, and ourselves. If that proposal had been accepted the actual controversy would have been settled with honour to everybody, and the whole of this terrible welter would have been avoided. And with whom does the responsibility rest for its refusal and for all the illimitable sufferings which now confront the world? One Power, and one Power only, and that Power is Germany.

There is the foundation and origin of this world-wide catastrophe. We persevered to the end, and no one who has not been confronted, as we were, with the responsibility, which unless you had been face to face with it you could not possibly measure, the responsibility of determining the issues of peace and war—no one who has not been in that position can realise the strength, energy, and persistence with which we laboured for peace. We persevered by every expedient that diplomacy could suggest—straining almost to the breaking point our most cherished friendships and obligations—even to the last moment making effort upon effort, and indulging hope against hope. Then, and only then, when we were at last compelled to realise that the choice lay between honour and dishonour, between treachery and good faith—when we at last reached the dividing line which makes or mars a nation worthy of the name, it was then only that we declared for war.

Is there any one in this hall, or in this United Kingdom, or in the vast Empire of which we here stand in the capital and centre, who blames us or repents our decision? If not, as I believe there is not, we must steel ourselves to the task, and, in the spirit which animated our forefathers in their struggle against the dominion of Napoleon, we must, and we shall, persevere to the end.

It would be a criminal mistake to underestimate either the magnitude, the fighting quality, or the staying power of the forces which are arrayed against us; but it would be equally foolish, and equally indefensible to belittle our own resources whether for resistance or for attack. Belgium has shown us by a memorable and glorious example what can be done by a relatively small State when its citizens are animated and fired by the spirit of patriotism.

In France and Russia we have as allies two of the greatest Powers in the world, engaged with us in a common cause, who do not mean to separate themselves from us any more than we mean to separate ourselves from them. We have upon the seas the strongest and most magnificent Fleet the world has ever seen. The Expeditionary Force which left our shores less than a month ago has never been surpassed, as its glorious achievements in the field have already made clear, not only in material equipment, but in the physical and moral quality of its constituent parts.

As regards the Navy, I am sure my right honourable friend Mr. Churchill, whom we are glad to see here, will tell you there is happily little more to be done. I do not flatter it when I say that its superiority is equally marked in every department and sphere of its activity. We rely on it with the most absolute confidence, not only to guard our shores against the possibility of invasion, not only to seal up the gigantic battleships of the

enemy in the inglorious seclusion of their own ports, whence from time to time he furtively steals forth to sow the sea with murderous snares, which are more full of menace to neutral ships than to the British Fleet. Our Navy does all this, and while it is thirsting, I do not doubt for that trial of strength in a fair and open fight which has so far been prudently denied it, it does a great deal more. It has hunted the German Mercantile Marine from the high seas. It has kept open our own stores of food supply, and largely curtailed those of the enemy, and when the few German cruisers which still infest the more distant ocean routes have been disposed of—as they will be very soon—it will achieve for British and neutral commerce, passing backwards and forwards, from and to every port of our Empire, a security as complete as it has ever enjoyed in the days of unbroken peace. Let us honour the memory of the gallant seamen who, in the pursuit of one or another of these varied and responsible duties, have already laid down their lives for their country.

In regard to the Army, there is a call for a new, a continuous, a determined, and a united effort. For, as the war goes on, we shall have not merely to replace the wastage caused by casualties, not merely to maintain our military power at its original level, but we must, if we are to play a worthy part, enlarge its scale, increase its numbers, and multiply many times its effectiveness as a fighting instrument. The object of the appeal which I have made to you, my Lord Mayor, and to the other Chief Magistrates of our capital cities, is to impress upon them the imperious urgency of this supreme duty.

Our self-governing Dominions throughout the Empire, without any solicitation on our part, have demonstrated with a spontaneousness and unanimity unparalleled in history their determination to affirm their brotherhood with us, and to make our cause their own.

From Canada, from Australia, from New Zealand, from South Africa, and from Newfoundland, the children of the Empire assert, not as an obligation, but as a privilege, their right, and their willingness to contribute money, material, and, what is better than all, the strength and sinews, the fortunes, and lives of their best manhood.

India, too, with not less alacrity, has claimed her share in the common task. Every class and creed, British and native, princes and people, Hindoos and Mohammedans, vie with one another in a noble and emulous rivalry. Two divisions of our magnificent Indian Army are already on their way. We welcome with appreciation and affection their proffered aid, and, in an Empire which knows no distinction of race or class, where all alike, as subjects of the King Emperor, are joint and equal custodians of our common interests and fortunes, we here hail with profound and heartfelt gratitude their association side by

side and shoulder to shoulder with our home and Dominion troops, under the flag which is a symbol to all of a unity that the world in arms cannot dissever or dissolve.

With these inspiring appeals and examples from our fellow-subjects all over the world, what are we doing, and what ought we to do at home? Mobilisation was ordered on the 4th August. Immediately afterwards Lord Kitchener issued his call for 100,000 recruits for the Regular Army, which has been followed by a second call for another 100,000. The response up to to-day gives us between 250,000 and 300,000 men, and I am glad to say that London has done its share. The total number of Londoners enlisted is not less than 42,000. I need hardly say that the appeal involves no disparagement or discouragement of the Territorial Force. The number of units in that force who have volunteered for foreign service is most satisfactory, and grows every day. We look to them with confidence to increase their numbers, to perfect their organisation in training, and to play the efficient part which has always been assigned to them, both offensive and defensive, in the military system of the Empire.

But to go back to the expansion of the Regular Army, we want more men, men of the best fighting quality, and if for the moment the number who offer and are accepted should prove to be in excess of those who can at once be adequately trained and equipped, do not let them doubt that appropriate provision will be made for incorporation of all willing and able men in the fighting forces of the King. We want first of all men, and we shall endeavour to secure that men desiring to serve together shall, wherever possible, be allotted to the same regiment or corps. The raising of battalions by counties or by municipalities with this object will be in every way encouraged, but we want not less urgently a larger supply of ex-non-commissioned officers, the pick of the men who have served their country in the past, and whom, therefore, in most cases, we shall be asking to give up regular employment in order that they may return to the work for the State which they alone are competent to do.

The appeal which we make is addressed quite as much to their employers as to the men themselves. They ought surely to be assured of reinstatement in their positions at the end of the war. Finally, there are numbers of commissioned officers now in retirement with large experience of handling troops, who have served their country in the past. Let them come forward, too, and show their willingness, if need be, to train bodies of men, for whom for the moment no regular cadres or units can be found. I have little more to say.

As to the actual progress of the war I will not say anything except that, in my judgment, in whatever direction we look there is abundant ground for pride and for confidence.

I say nothing more, because I think we should bear in min

all of us, that we are at present watching the fluctuations of fortune only in the early stages of what is going to be a protracted struggle. We must learn to take long views and to cultivate above all other qualities—those of patience, endurance, and steadfastness.

Meanwhile, let us go, each one of us, to his or her appropriate part in the great common task.

Never had a people more or richer sources of encouragement and inspiration. Let us realise, first of all, that we are fighting as a United Empire, in a cause worthy of the highest traditions of our race. Let us keep in mind the patient and indomitable seamen who never relax for a moment, night or day, their stern vigil on the lonely seas. Let us keep in mind our gallant troops, who to-day, after a fortnight's continuous fighting under conditions which would try the mettle of the best army that ever took the field, maintain not only an undefeated but an unbroken front.

Finally, let us recall the memories of the great men and the great deeds of the past, commemorated some of them in the monuments which we see around us on these walls, not forgetting the dying message of the younger Pitt—his last public utterance, made at the table of your predecessor, my Lord Mayor, in this very hall, "England has saved herself by her exertions and will, as I trust, save Europe by her example.' The England of those days gave a noble answer to his appeal and did not sheath the sword until after nearly twenty years of fighting the freedom of Europe was secured. Let us go and do likewise.

A Speech in Edinburgh 18th September, 1914

A FORTNIGHT ago to-day, in the Guildhall of the City of London, I endeavoured to present to the nation and to the world the reasons which have compelled us, the people of all others who have the greatest interest in the maintenance of peace, to engage in the hazards and the horrors of war. I do not wish to repeat to-night in any detail what I then said. The war has arisen immediately and ostensibly, as everyone knows, out of a dispute between Austria and Servia, in which we in this country had no direct concern. The diplomatic history of those critical weeks—the last fortnight in July and the first few days of August—is now accessible to all the world. It has been supplemented during the last few days by the admirable and exhaustive dispatch of our late Ambassador at Vienna, Sir Maurice de Bunsen—a dispatch which I trust everybody will read, and no one who reads it can doubt that largely through the efforts of my right hon. friend and colleague, Sir Edward Grey, the conditions of a peaceful settlement of the actual controversy were already within sight when on July 31 Germany, by her own deliberate act, made war a certainty.

The facts are incontrovertible. They are not sought to be controverted, except, indeed, by the invention and circulation of such wanton falsehoods as that France was contemplating and even commencing the violation of Belgian territory as a first step on her road to Germany. The result is that we are at war, and we are at war—as I have already shown elsewhere, and as I repeat here to-night—for three reasons. In the first place, to vindicate the sanctity of treaty obligations and of what is properly called the public law of Europe; in the second place, to assert and to enforce the independence of free States, relatively small and weak, against encroachment and violence by the

strong ; and in the third place, to withstand, as we believe in the best interests not only of our own Empire, but of civilization at large, the arrogant claim of a single Power to dominate the development of the destinies of Europe.

Since I last spoke some faint attempts have been made in Germany to dispute the accuracy and the sincerity of this statement of our attitude and aim. It has been suggested for instance, that our professed zeal for treaty rights and for the interests of small States is a new-born and simulated passion. What, we are asked, has Great Britain cared in the past for treaties or for the smaller nationalities, except when she had some ulterior and selfish purpose of her own to serve? I am quite ready to meet that challenge, and to meet it in the only way in which it could be met, by reference to history ; and out of many illustrations which I might take I will content myself with two, widely removed in point of time, but both, as it happens, very apposite to the present case. I will go back first to the war carried on at first against the revolutionary Government of France, and then against Napoleon, which broke out in 1793 and which lasted for more than 20 years. We had then at the head of the Government in this country one of the most peace-loving Ministers who has ever presided over our fortunes, Mr. Pitt. For three years, from 1789 to 1792, he resolutely refused to interfere in any way with the revolutionary proceedings in France, or in the wars that sprang out of them, and as late, I think, as February in 1792, in a memorable speech in the House of Commons, which shows amongst other things the shortness of human foresight, he declared that there never was a time when we in this country could more reasonably expect 15 years of peace. And what was it that, within a few months of that declaration, led this pacific Minister to war? It was the invasion of the treaty rights, guaranteed by ourselves, of a small European State—the then States General of Holland.

For nearly 200 years the Great Powers of Europe had guaranteed to Holland the exclusive navigation of the River Scheldt. The French revolutionary Government invaded what is now Belgium, and as a first act of hostility to Holland declared the navigation of the Scheldt to be open. Our interest in that matter then, as now, was relatively small and insignificant. But what was Mr. Pitt's reply? I quote you the exact words he used in the House of Commons ; they are so applicable to the circumstances of the present moment. This is in 1793 :—

"England will never consent that another country should arrogate the power of annulling at her pleasure the political system of Europe established by solemn treaties and guaranteed by the consent of the Powers."

He went on to say that "If this House—the House of Commons—means substantial good faith to its engagements, if it

retains a just sense of the solemn faith of treaties, it must show a determination to support them." And it was in consequence of that stubborn and unyielding determination to maintain treaties, to defend small States, to resist the aggressive domination of a single Power, that we were involved in a war, which we had done everything to avoid, and which was carried on upon a scale both as to area and as to duration up to then unexampled in the history of mankind.

That is one precedent. Let me give you one more. I come down to 1870, when this very treaty to which we are parties no less than Germany, and which guarantees the integrity and independence of Belgium, was threatened. Mr. Gladstone was then Prime Minister of this country, and he was, if possible, a stronger and more ardent advocate of peace even than Mr. Pitt himself. Mr. Gladstone, pacific as he was, felt so strongly the sanctity of our obligations that—though here again we had no direct interest of any kind at stake—he made agreements with France and Prussia to co-operate with either of the belligerents if the other violated Belgian territory. I should like to read a passage from a speech 10 years later, delivered in 1880 by Mr. Gladstone himself in this city of Edinburgh, in which he reviewed that transaction and explained his reasons for it.

After narrating the facts which I have summarized, he said this : " If we had gone to war "—which he was prepared to do—" we should have gone to war for freedom. We should have gone to war for public right, we should have gone to war to save human happiness from being invaded by a tyrannous and lawless Power. That," Mr. Gladstone said, " is what I call a good cause, gentlemen. And though I detest war, and there are no epithets too strong if you will supply me with them that I will not endeavour to heap upon its head ; in such a war as that, while the breath in my body is continued to me, I am ready to engage."

So much for our own action in the past in regard to treaties and small States. But, faint as is this denial of this part of our case, it becomes fainter still, it dissolves into the thinnest of thin air, when it has to deal with our contention that we and our Allies are withstanding a Power whose aim is nothing less than the domination of Europe. It is, indeed, the avowed belief of the leaders of German thought, I will not say of the German people, but of those who for many years past have controlled German policy, that such a domination, carrying with it the supremacy of what they call German culture and the German spirit, is the best thing that could happen to the world.

Let me, then, ask for a moment what is this German culture? What is this German spirit of which the Emperor's armies are at present the missionaries in Belgium and in France? Mankind owes much to Germany, a very great debt for the contributions

she has made to philosophy, to science, and to the arts, but that which is specifically German in the movement of the world in the last 30 years has been, on the intellectual side, the development of the doctrine of the supreme and ultimate prerogative in human affairs of material force, and on the practical side the taking of the foremost place in the fabrication and the multiplication of the machinery of destruction. To the men who have adopted this gospel, who believe that power is the be all and end all of a State, naturally a treaty is nothing more than a piece of parchment, and all the old world talk about the rights of the weak and the obligations of the strong is only so much threadbare and nauseating cant.

One very remarkable feature of this new school of doctrine, whatever be its intellectual or its ethical merits, is that it has turned out, as an actual code for life, to be a very purblind philosophy.

For German culture and the German spirit did not save the Emperor and his people from delusions and miscalculations as dangerous as they were absurd in regard to the British Empire. We were believed by these cultivated observers to be the decadent descendants of a people who, by a combination of luck and of fraud had managed to obtain dominion over a vast quantity of the surface and the populations of the globe. This fortuitous aggregation which goes by the name of the British Empire was supposed to be so insecurely founded, and so loosely knit together, that, at the first touch of serious menace from without, it would fall to pieces and tumble to the ground. Our great Dominions were getting heartily tired of the Imperial connection. India, it was notorious to every German traveller, was on the verge of open revolt, and here at home we, the people of this United Kingdom, were riven by dissension so deep and so fierce that our energies, whether for resistance or for attack, would be completely paralysed. What a fantastic dream! And what a rude awakening! And in this vast and grotesque, and yet tragic, miscalculation is to be found one of the roots, perhaps the main root, of the present war.

But let us go one step more. It has been said "By their fruits ye shall know them," and history will record that, when the die was cast and the struggle began, it was the disciples of that same creed who revived methods of warfare which have for centuries past been condemned by the common sense, as well as by the humanity, of the great mass of the civilised world.

Louvain, Malines, Termonde. These are names which will henceforth be branded on the brow of German culture. The ruthless sacking of the ancient and famous towns of Belgium is fitly supplemented by the story that reaches us only to-day from our own Headquarters in France, of the proclamation issued less than a week ago by the German authorities, who were for a

moment, and, happily, for little more than a moment, in occupation of the venerable city of Reims. Let me read, for it should be put on record, the concluding paragraph of the proclamation:

> With a view to securing adequately the safety of the troops, and to instil calm into the population of Reims, the persons named below [81 in number, and including all the leading citizens of the town] have been seized as hostages by the Commander-in-Chief of the German Army. These hostages will be hanged at the slightest attempt at disorder. Also the town will be totally or partially burned and the inhabitants will be hanged for any infraction of the above.
>
> By order of German authorities.

Do not let it be forgotten that it is from a Power whose intellectual leaders are imbued with the ideal that I have described, and whose generals in the field sanction and even direct these practices—it is from that Power that the claim proceeds to impose its culture, its spirit—which means its domination—upon the rest of Europe. That is a claim, I say to you, to all my fellow-countrymen, to every citizen and subject of the British Empire whose ears and eyes my words can reach—that is a claim that everything that is great in our past, and everything that promises hope or progress in our future, summons us to resist to the end. The task—do not let us deceive ourselves—the task will not be a light one. Its full accomplishment—and nothing short of full accomplishment is worthy of our traditions or will satisfy our resolve—will certainly take months, it may even take years. I have come here to-night, not to ask you to count the cost, for no price can be too high to pay when honour and freedom are at stake, but to put before you, as I have tried to do, the magnitude of the issue and the supreme necessity that lies upon us as a nation, nay, as a brotherhood and family, of nations, to rise to its height and acquit ourselves of our duty.

The war has now lasted more than six weeks. Our supremacy at sea has not been seriously questioned. Full supplies of food and of raw materials are making their way to our shores from every quarter of the globe. Our industries, with one or two exceptions, maintain their activities. Unemployment is so far not seriously in excess of the average. The monetary situation has improved, and every effort that the zeal and the skill of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with the co-operation and expert advice of the bankers and business men of the country, can devise—every effort is being made to achieve what is most essential—the complete re-establishment of the foreign exchanges. Meanwhile, the merchant shipping of the enemy has been hunted from the seas, and our seamen are still, patiently or impatiently, waiting a chance to try conclusions with the opposing Fleet. Great and incalculable is the debt which we have owed during these weeks, and which in increasing measure

we shall continue to owe, to our Navy. The Navy needs no help, and as the months roll on—thanks to a far-sighted policy in the past—its proportionate strength will grow.

If we turn to our Army we can say with equal justice and pride that, during these weeks, it has revived the most glorious records of its past. Sir John French and his gallant officers and men live in our hearts, as they will live in the memories of those who come afterwards. But splendid achievements such as these—equally splendid in retirement and in advance—cannot be won without a heavy expenditure of life and limb, of equipment, and supplies. Even now, at this very early stage, I suppose there is hardly a person here who is not suffering from anxiety and suspense. Some of us are plunged in sorrow for the loss of those we love, cut off, some of them, in the springtide of their young lives. We will not mourn for them overmuch.

> One crowded hour of glorious life
> Is worth an age without a name.

But these gaps have to be filled. The wastage of modern war is relentless and almost inconceivable. We have—I mean His Majesty's Government have—since the war began dispatched to the front already considerably over 200,000 men, and the amplest provision has been made for keeping them supplied with all that was necessary in food, in stores, and in equipment. They will very soon be reinforced by Regular troops from India, from Egypt, and the Mediterranean, and in due time by the contingents which our Dominions are furnishing with such magnificent patriotism and liberality. We have with us here our own gallant Territorials, becoming every day a fitter and a finer force, eager and anxious to respond to any call, either at home or abroad, that may be made upon them.

But that is not enough. We must do still more. Already in little more than a month we have half a million recruits for the four new Armies which, as Lord Kitchener told the country yesterday, he means to have ready to bring into the field. Enlisting as we were last week, in a single day as many men as we have been accustomed to enlist in the course of a whole year, it is not, I think, surprising that the machinery has been overstrained, and there have been many cases of temporary inconvenience and hardship and discomfort. With time and patience and good organization these things will be set right, and the new scale of allowances which was announced in Parliament yesterday will do much to mitigate the lot of wives and children and dependents who are left behind. We want more men, and perhaps most of all help for training them. Every one in the whole of this kingdom who has in days gone by, as officer or as non-commissioned officer, served his country never had a greater or a more fruitful opportunity of service than is presented to him to-day.

We appeal to the manhood of the three kingdoms. To such an appeal I know well, coming from your senior representative in the House of Commons, that Scotland will not turn a deaf ear. Scotland is doing well, and indeed more than well, and no part of Scotland, I believe, in proportion better than Edinburgh. I cannot say with what pleasure I heard the figures given out by the Lord Provost, and those which have been supplied to me by the gallant general who has the Scottish Command, which show, indeed, as we expected, that Scotland is more than holding her own.

In that connection let me repeat what I said two weeks ago in London. We think it of the highest importance that, as far as possible and subject to the accidents of war, people belonging to the same place, breathing the same atmosphere, having the same associations, should be kept together.

I have only one word more to say. What is it that we can offer to our recruits? They come to us spontaneously, under no kind of compulsion, of their own free will, to meet a national and an Imperial need; we present to them no material inducement in the shape either of bounty or bribe, and they have to face the prospect of a spell of hard training from which most of the comforts and all the luxuries that many of them have been accustomed to are rigorously banished. But then, when they are fully equipped for their patriotic task, they will have the opportunity of striking a blow, it may be even of laying down their lives, not to serve the cause of ambition or aggression, but to maintain the honour and the good faith of our country, to shield the independence of free States, to protect against brute force the principles of civilization and the liberties of Europe.

A Speech in Dublin, 25th Sept., 1914

SOME weeks ago I took it upon myself to suggest to the four principal magistrates of the United Kingdom that they should afford me an opportunity of making a personal appeal to their citizens at a great moment in our national history. I have already delivered my message in London and in Edinburgh. To the first of those great communities I was able to speak as an Englishman by birth and as a Londoner by early association and long residence. To the second, the capital of the Ancient Kingdom of Scotland, I had special credentials as having been for the best part of 30 years one of their representatives in the House of Commons, and now indeed by one of the melancholy privileges of time the senior among the Scottish members. But to-night when I come to Dublin I can put forward neither the one claim nor the other. I base my title, such as it is, to your hospitality and your hearing upon such service as during the whole of my political life I have tried, with a whole heart and to the best of my faculty and opportunities, to render to Ireland. I come here not as a partisan, not even as a politician, but as for the time being the head of the King's Government, to summon Ireland, a loyal and patriotic Ireland, to take her place in the defence of our common cause.

It is no part of my mission to-night—it is indeed at this time of day wholly unnecessary—to justify, still less to excuse, the part that the Government of the United Kingdom has taken in this supreme crisis in our national affairs. There have been wars in the past in regard to which there has been among us diversity of opinion, uneasiness as to the wisdom of our diplomacy, anxiety as to the expediency of our policy, doubts as to the essential righteousness of our cause. That is not the case to-day. Even in the memorable struggle which we waged a hundred years ago against the domination of Napoleon there was always a minority, respectable not merely in number, but in the sincerity and in the eminence of its adherents, which broke the front of

our national unity. Again I say that is not the case to-day. We feel as a nation—or rather, I ought to say, speaking here and looking round upon our vast Empire in every quarter of the globe, as a family of nations—without distinction of creed or party, of race or climate, of class or section, that we are united in defending principles and in maintaining interests which are vital, not only to the British Empire, but to all that is worth having in our common civilisation, and all that is worth hoping for in the future progress of mankind.

What better or higher cause, whether we succeed or fail, and we are going not to fail but to succeed, what higher cause can arouse and enlist the best energies of a free people than to be engaged at one and the same time in the vindication of international good faith, the protection of the weak against the violence of the strong, and in the assertion of the best ideals of all the free communities in all the ages of time and in every part of the world against the encroachments of those who believe, and who preach, and who practise the religion of force?

It is not—I am sure you will agree with me—it is not necessary to demonstrate once more that of this war Germany is the real and the responsible author. The proofs are patent, manifold, and overwhelming. Indeed, on the part of Germany herself we get upon this point, if denial at all, a denial only of the faintest and the most formal kind. For a generation past she has been preparing the ground, equipping herself both by land and sea, fortifying herself with alliances, what is perhaps even more important, teaching her youth to seek and to pursue as the first and the most important of all human things the supremacy of German power and the German spirit: and all that time biding her opportunity. Many of the great wars of history have been almost accidentally brought on. There was nothing in the quarrel, such as it was, between Austria and Servia that could not, and would not, have been settled by pacific means. But in the judgment of those who guide and control German policy the hour had come to strike the blow that had been long and deliberately prepared. In their hands lay the choice between peace and war, and their election was for war. In so deciding, as everybody now knows, Germany made two profound miscalculations, both of them natural enough in men who had come to believe that in international matters everything can be explained and measured in terms of material force.

What were those mistakes? The first was that Belgium, a small and prosperous country, entirely disinterested in European quarrels, guaranteed by the joint and several compact of the Great Powers, would not resent, and certainly would not resist, the use of her territory as a high road for an invading German force into France. How could they imagine that this little country, rather than allow her neutrality to be violated and her

independence insulted and menaced, was prepared that her fields should be drenched with the blood of her soldiers, her towns and villages devastated by marauders, her splendid heritage of monuments and of treasures, built up for her by the piety, art, and learning of the past, ruthlessly laid in ruins? The passionate attachment of a numerically small population to the bit of territory, which looks so little upon the map, the pride and unconquerable devotion of a free people to their own free State—these were things which apparently had never been dreamed of in the philosophy of Potsdam.

Rarely in history has there been a greater material disparity between the invaders and the invaded. But the moral disparity was at least equally great, for the indomitable resistance of the Belgians did more than change the whole face of the campaign. It proved to the world that ideas which cannot be weighed or measured by any material calculus can still inspire and dominate mankind. That is the reason why the whole sympathy of the civilised world at this moment is going out to these small States —Belgium, Servia, and Montenegro—that have played so worthy a part in this historic struggle.

But Germany was guilty of another and a still more capital blunder in relation to ourselves. I am not referring for the moment to the grotesque misunderstanding upon which I dwelt a week ago at Edinburgh—their carefully fostered belief that we here were so rent with civil distraction, so paralysed by lukewarmness or disaffection in our Dominions and Dependencies, that if it came to fighting we might be brushed aside as an impotent and even a negligible factor. The German misconception went even deeper than that. They asked themselves what interest, direct or material, had the United Kingdom in this conflict. Could any nation, least of all the cold, calculating, phlegmatic, egotistic British nation, embark upon a costly and bloody contest from which it had nothing in the way of profit to expect? They forgot that we, like the Belgians, had something at stake which cannot be translated into what one of our poets has called "the lore of nicely calculated less or more."

What was it we had at stake? First and foremost, the fulfilment to a small and relatively weak country of our plighted word, and, behind and beyond that, the maintenance of the whole system of international good faith, which is the moral bond of the civilised world. Here again they were wrong in thinking that the reign of ideas, old world ideas like those of duty and good faith, had been superseded by the ascendancy of force. War is at all times a hideous thing; at the best an evil to be chosen in preference to worse evils, and at the worst little better than the letting loose of hell upon earth. The Prophet of old spoke of the "confused noise of battle and garments rolled in blood," but in these modern days, with the gigantic scale of the

opposing armies and the scientific developments of the instruments of destruction, war has become an infinitely more devastating thing than it ever was before. The hope that the general recognition of a humaner code would soften or abate some of its worst brutalities has been rudely dispelled by the events of the last few weeks. The German invasion of Belgium and France contributes indeed some of the blackest pages to its sombre annals. Rarely has a non-combatant population suffered more severely, and rarely, if ever, have the monuments of piety and of learning and of those sentiments of religious and national association of which they are the permanent embodiment, even in the worst times of the most ruthless warriors been so shamefully and cynically desecrated; and behind the actual theatre of conflict, with its smoke and its carnage, there are the sufferings of those who are left behind, the waste of wealth, the economic dislocation, the heritage—the long heritage—of enmities and misunderstanding which war brings in its train.

Why do I dwell upon these things? It is to say this—that great as is the responsibility of those who allow their country —as we have done—to be drawn into such a welter, there is one thing much worse than to take such a responsibility, and that is, upon a fitting occasion, to shirk it. Our record in the matter is clear. We strove up to the last moment for peace, and only when we were satisfied that the price of peace was the betrayal of other countries, and the dishonour and degradation of our own, did we take up the sword.

I should like, beyond this inquiry into causes and motives, to ask your attention and that of my fellow-countrymen to the end which, in this war, we ought to keep in view. Forty-four years ago, at the time of the war of 1870, Mr. Gladstone used these words. He said: "The greatest triumph of our time will be the enthronement of the idea of public right as the governing idea of European politics." Nearly 50 years have passed. Little progress, it seems, has as yet been made towards that great and beneficent change, but it seems to me to be now at this moment as good a definition as we can have of our European policy. The idea of public right—what does it mean when translated into concrete terms? It means first and foremost, the clearing of the ground by the definite repudiation of militarism as the governing factor in the relation of States and of the future moulding of the European world. It means, next, that room must be found and kept for the independent existence and the free development of the smaller nationalities, each with a corporate consciousness of its own. Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, the Scandinavian countries, Greece, and the Balkan States—they must be recognised as having exactly as good a title as their more powerful neighbours—more powerful in strength and in wealth—to a place in the sun. And it means finally, or it

ought to mean, perhaps by a slow and gradual process, the substitution for force, for the clash of competing ambitions, for groupings and alliances and a precarious equipoise, of a real European partnership based on the recognition of equal rights, and established and enforced by a common will. A year ago that would have sounded like a Utopian idea. It is probably one that may not, or will not, be realised either to-day or to-morrow, but if and when this war is decided in favour of the Allies it will at once come within the range, and before long within the grasp, of European statesmanship.

I go back for a moment to the peculiar aspects of the actual case upon which I have dwelt, because it seems to me that they ought to make a special appeal to the people of Ireland. Ireland is a loyal country, and she would, I know, respond with alacrity to any summons which called upon her to take her share in the assertion and the defence of our common interests. But the issues raised by this war are of such a kind that unless I mistake her people and misrepresent her history, they touch a vibrating chord both in her imagination and in her conscience. How can you Irishmen be deaf to the cry of the smaller nationalities to help them in their struggle for freedom, whether, as in the case of Belgium, in maintaining what she has won, or, as in the case of Poland or the Balkan States, in regaining what they have lost or in acquiring and putting upon a stable foundation what has never been fully theirs? How, again, can you Irishmen, if I understand you, sit by in cool detachment and with folded arms while we in company of our gallant Allies of France and Russia, are opposing a world-wide resistance to pretensions which threaten to paralyse and sterilise the progress and the best destinies of mankind?

During the last few weeks Sir John French and his heroic forces have worthily sustained our cause. The casualties have been heavy—Ireland has had her share. But although they have been increased during the last week from the ranks of our gallant Navy by one of the hazards of warfare at sea, of those who have fallen in both services we may ask how could men die better? They have left behind them an example and an appeal. From all quarters of the Empire its best manhood is flowing in. The first Indian Contingent is, I believe, landing to-day at Marseilles, and in all the ports of our great Dominions the convoys are already mustering.

Over half a million recruits have joined the colours here at home, and I come to ask you in Ireland, though you do not need my asking, to take your part. There was a time when, through the operations of laws which everyone now acknowledges to have been both unjust and impolitic, the martial spirit and capacity for which Irishmen have always been conspicuous found its chief outlet in the alien armies of the Continent. I have seen it

computed—I do not know whether with precise accuracy—but I have seen it computed upon good authority that in the first 50 years of the 18th century, when the penal laws were here in full swing, nearly half a million Irishmen enlisted under the banners of the Empire of France, and of Spain. We at home in the United Kingdom suffered a double loss, for, not only were we drained year by year of some of our best fighting material, but over and over again we found ourselves engaged in battle array, suffering from and inflicting deadly loss upon those who might have been, and under happier conditions would have been, fellow soldiers of our own. The British Empire has always been proud, and with reason, of Irish regiments and their Irish leaders, and was never prouder of them than it is to-day. We ask you here in Ireland to give us more, to give them without stinting. We ask Ireland to give of her sons the most in number, the best in quality, that a proud and loyal daughter of the Empire ought to devote to the common cause. The conditions seem to me to be exceptionally favourable for the purpose. We have of late been witnessing here in Ireland a spontaneous enrolment and organisation in all parts of the country of bodies of volunteers. I say nothing—for I wish to-night to avoid trespassing upon even a square inch of controversial ground—I say nothing of the causes or motives which brought them originally into existence, and have fostered their growth and strength. I will only say—and this is my nearest approach to politics to-night—that there are two things which to my mind have become unthinkable. The first is that one section of Irishmen are going to fight another, and the second is that Great Britain is going to fight either.

Speaking here in Dublin, I may perhaps address myself for a moment particularly to the National Volunteers, and I am going to ask them all over Ireland—not only them, but I make the appeal to them particularly—to contribute with promptitude and enthusiasm a large and worthy contingent of recruits to the second new Army of half a million which is growing up, as it were, out of the ground. I should like to see, and we all want to see, an Irish Brigade, or, better still, an Irish Army Corps. Do not let them be afraid that by joining the colours they will lose their identity and become absorbed in some invertebrate mass, or what is perhaps equally repugnant, be artificially redistributed in units which have no national cohesion or character. We wish to the utmost limit that military exigencies will allow that men who have been already associated in this or that district in training and in common exercises should be kept together and continue to recognise the corporate bond which now unites them. And of one thing further I am sure. We are in urgent need of competent officers, and if officers now engaged in training these men prove equal to the test, there is no fear that their services will not be gladly and gratefully retained.

But, I repeat, the Empire needs recruits, needs them at once, that they may be fully trained and equipped in time to take their part in what may well be the decisive fields of the greatest struggle in the history of the world. That is our immediate necessity, and no Irishman in responding to it need be afraid that he is prejudicing the future of the Volunteers. I do not say and I cannot say, under what precise form or organisation, but I trust and believe, and indeed I am certain, that the Volunteers will become a permanent part, an integral and a characteristic part, of the defensive forces of the Crown.

If our need is great, your opportunity is also great. The call which I am making is, as you know well, backed by the sympathy of your fellow-Irishmen in all parts of the Empire and the world. Old animosities between us are dead, scattered like the autumn leaves to the four winds of heaven. We are a united nation, owing and paying to our Sovereign the heartfelt allegiance of men who at home love and enjoy for themselves the liberty which our soldiers and our sailors are fighting, by land and by sea, to maintain and to extend for others. There is no question of compulsion or bribery. What we want, we believe you are ready and eager to give—the free-will offering of a free people.

A Speech in Cardiff 2nd October, 1914

IN the course of the last month I have addressed meetings in London, Edinburgh, and Dublin, and now in the completion of the task, which I set myself, and which the kindness of our great municipalities has allowed me to perform, I have come to Cardiff. England, Scotland, and Ireland have each of them a definite and a well-established capital city, but I have always understood that there was some doubt where the capital of the Principality of Wales was to be found on the map. Wales is a single and indivisible entity with a life of its own, drawing its vitality from an ancient past, and both, I believe, in the volume and in the reality of its activity never more virile than it is to-day. But I do not know that there is any general agreement amongst Welshmen as to where their capital is situated, and without attempting as an outsider to differentiate or to reconcile competing claims, I stand here to-night in what I believe to be a safe coign of vantage under the hospitality and the authority of the Lord Mayor of Cardiff.

Though I am not a stranger to Wales, you may nevertheless ask why I have requested your permission to address this great audience here to-night. I am not altogether an idle man, and during the last two months I can honestly say that there has hardly been a day, indeed there have been very few hours, which have not been preoccupied with grave cares and responsibility. But throughout them all I have been, and I am, sustained by a profound and unshakable belief in the righteousness of our cause, and by overwhelming evidence that in the pursuit and the maintenance of that cause the Government have behind them, without distinction of race, of party, or of class, the whole moral and material support of the British Empire. Let me take the opportunity to acknowledge and to welcome the calm, reasoned, and dignified statement of our case which the Christian Churches of the United Kingdom, through some of their most distinguished leaders and ministers, have this week presented to the world.

I will not repeat, and I certainly cannot improve upon it, and indeed I am not here to-night to argue out propositions which British citizens in every part of the world to-day regard as beyond the reach of controversy. I do not suppose that in the history of mankind there has ever been in such a vast and diverse community agreement so unanimous in purpose, so concentrated, a corporate conscience so clear, so convinced, co-operation so spontaneous, so ardent, and so resolute. Just consider what it means, here in this United Kingdom—England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales—to hear one plain, harmonious, united voice, while over the seas from our great Dominions Canada, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, our Crown Colonies, swell the chorus.

In India—where whatever we won by the sword we hold and we retain by the more splendid title of just and disinterested rule, by the authority, not of a despot, but of a trustee, the response to our common appeal has moved all our feelings to their profoundest depths, and has been such as to shiver and to shatter the vain and ignorant imaginings of our enemies. That is a remarkable and indeed a unique spectacle.

What is it that stirred the imagination, aroused the conscience, enlisted the manhood, welded into one compact and irresistible force the energies and the will of the greatest Imperial structure that the world has ever known? That is a question which, for a moment, it is well worth asking and answering. Let me say, then, first negatively, that we are not impelled, any of us, by some of the motives which have occasioned the bloody struggles of the past. In this case, so far as we are concerned, ambition and aggression play no part. What do we want? What do we aim at? What have we to gain?

We are a great, world-wide, peace-loving partnership. By the wisdom and the courage of our forefathers, by great deeds of heroism and adventure on land and sea, by the insight and corporate sagacity, the tried and tested experience of many generations, we have built up a dominion which is buttressed by the two pillars of Liberty and Law. We are not vain enough or foolish enough to think that in the course of a long process there have not been blunders, or worse than blunders, and that to-day our Dominion does not fall short of what in our ideals it might and it ought and, we believe, it is destined to be. But such as we have received it, and such as we hope to leave it, with it we are content.

We do not covet any people's territory. We have no desire to impose our rule upon alien populations. The British Empire is enough for us. All that we wished for, all that we wish for now, is to be allowed peaceably to consolidate our own resources, to raise within the Empire the level of common opportunity, to draw closer the bond of affection and confidence between its

parts, and to make it everywhere the worthy home of the best traditions of British liberty. Does it not follow from that, that nowhere in the world is there a people who have stronger motives to avoid war and to seek and ensue peace? Why, then, are the British people throughout the length and breadth of our Empire everywhere turning their ploughshares into swords? Why are the best of our able-bodied men leaving the fields and the factory and the counting-house for the recruiting office and the training camp?

If, as I have said, we have no desire to add to our Imperial burdens, either in area or in responsibility, it is equally true that in entering this war we had no ill will to gratify, nor wrongs of our own to avenge. In regard to Germany in particular, our policy—repeatedly stated in Parliament, resolutely pursued year after year both in London and in Berlin—our policy has been to remove one by one the outstanding causes of possible friction, and so to establish a firm basis for cordial relations in the days to come.

We have said from the first—I have said it over and over again, and so has Sir Edward Grey—we have said from the first that our friendships with certain Powers, with France, with Russia, and with Japan, were not to be construed as implying cold feelings, and still less hostile purposes, against any other Power. But at the same time we have always made it clear, to quote words used by Sir Edward Grey as far back as November, 1911—I quote his exact words—"One does not make new friendships worth having by deserting old ones. New friendships by all means let us have, but not at the expense of the ones we have." That has been, and I trust will always be, the attitude of those whom the Kaiser in his now notorious proclamation describes as the "treacherous English."

We laid down—and I wish to call not only your attention but the attention of the whole world to this, when so many false legends are now being invented and circulated—in the following year—in the year 1912 we laid down in terms carefully approved by the Cabinet, and which I will textually quote, what our relations with Germany ought in our view to be. We said, and we communicated this to the German Government—"Britain declares that she will neither make, nor join in, any unprovoked attack upon Germany. Aggression upon Germany is not the subject, and forms no part, of any treaty, understanding, or combination to which Britain is now a party, nor will she become a party to anything that has such an object." There is nothing ambiguous or equivocal about that.

But that was not enough for German statesmanship. They wanted us to go further. They asked us to pledge ourselves absolutely to neutrality in the event of Germany being engaged in war, and this, mind you, at a time when Germany was enor-

mously increasing both her aggressive and her defensive resources, especially upon the sea. They asked us, to put it quite plainly, for a free hand, so far as we were concerned, when they selected the opportunity to overbear, to dominate the European world.

To such a demand but one answer was possible, and that was the answer we gave. None the less we have continued during the whole of the last two years, and never more energetically and more successfully than during the Balkan crisis of last year, to work not only for the peace of Europe but for the creation of a better international atmosphere and a more cordial co-operation between all the Powers. From both points of view, that of our domestic interests as a kingdom and an Empire, and that of our settled attitude and policy in the counsels of Europe, a war such as this, which injures the one and frustrates the other, was and could only be regarded as among the worst of catastrophes—among the worst of catastrophes, but not the worst.

Four weeks ago, speaking at the Guildhall, in the City of London, when the war was still in its early days, I asked my fellow-countrymen with what countenance, with what conscience, had we basely chosen to stand aloof, we could have watched from day to day the terrible unrolling of events—public faith shamelessly broken, the freedom of a small people trodden in the dust, the wanton invasion of Belgium and then of France, by hordes who leave behind them at every stage of their progress a dismal trail of savagery, of devastation, and of desecration worthy of the blackest annals in the history of barbarism. That was four weeks ago. The war has now lasted for 60 days, and every one of those days has added to the picture its share of sombre and repulsive traits. We now see clearly written down in letters of carnage and spoliation the real aims and methods of this long-prepared and well-organized scheme against the liberties of Europe.

I say nothing of other countries. I pass no judgment upon them. But if we here in Great Britain had abstained and remained neutral, forsworn our word, deserted our friends, faltered and compromised with the plain dictates of our duty—nay, if we had not shown ourselves ready to strike with all our forces at the common enemy of civilization and freedom, there would have been nothing left for our country but to veil her face in shame and to be ready in her turn—for her time would have come—to share the doom which she would have richly deserved, and after centuries of glorious life to go down to her grave "unwept, unhonoured, and unsung."

Let us gladly acknowledge what becomes clearer and clearer every day, that the world is just as ready as it ever was, and no part of it readier than the British Empire, to understand and to respond to moral issues. The new school of German thought

has been teaching for a generation past that in the affairs of nations there is no code of ethics. According to their doctrine force and nothing but force is the test and the measure of right. As the events which are going on before our eyes have made it plain, they have succeeded only too well in indoctrinating with their creed—I will not say the people of Germany,—like Burke, I will not attempt to draw up an indictment against a nation—I will not say the people of Germany, but those who control and execute German policy.

But it is one of those products of German genius which, whether or not it was intended exclusively for home consumption, has not, I am happy to say, found a market abroad, and certainly not within the boundaries of the British Empire. We still believe here, old-fashioned people as we are, in the sanctity of treaties, that the weak have rights and that the strong have duties, that small nationalities have every bit as good a title as large ones to life and independence, and that freedom for its own sake is as well worth fighting for to-day as it ever was in the past. And we look forward at the end of this war to a Europe in which these great simple and venerable truths will be recognized and safeguarded for ever against the recrudescence of the era of blood and iron. Stated in a few words that is the reason for our united front, the reason that has brought our gallant Indian warriors to Marseilles, that is extracting from our most distant Dominions the best of their manhood, that in the course of two months has transformed the United Kingdom into a vast recruiting ground.

Now I have come here to-night not to talk, but to do business. Before I sit down I want to say to you a few practical words. We are confronted, as you all know and recognize, by the greatest emergency in our history. Every part of the United Kingdom, and every man and every woman in every part of it, is called upon to make his or her contribution, and to do his or her share, and our primary business is to fill the ranks. There is, I find, in some quarters an apprehension that the recruiting for the New Army, and the functions to be assigned to that Army when it is formed and trained, may interfere with, or may in some way belittle or disparage the Territorial Force. Believe me, no delusion could be more mischievous or more complete.

No praise could be too high for the patriotic and sustained efforts of the county associations or for the quality and efficiency of the Territorial troops. It is a comparatively easy thing to make great efforts and sacrifices under the stress and strain, which we are now experiencing, of a supreme crisis. The Territorials, without any such stimulus, in the piping times of peace, when war and the sufferings and the struggles and the glories of war were contingent and remote, these men gave their time, sacrificed their leisure—not only in their annual training, but in

thousands of cases both officers and men devoted their spare hours—to preparing themselves in the study and the practice of the art of war. They have now been embodied for two months, and I am expressing the considered opinion of one of the most eminent generals when I say that the divisions now in camp in various parts of the country, and improving every day in efficiency, have completely justified their title to play any part that may be assigned to them, either in home defence, in the manning of our garrisons, or in the battle lines at the front.

It is then no want of appreciation of the patriotism and of the efficiency of the Territorial Forces that leads me to ask you to-night for recruits for the Regular Army. We wish, so far as military exigencies permit, that the new battalions and squadrons and batteries should retain their local associations and their corporate and distinctive national character. Why, the freedom and the autonomy of the smaller nationalities is one of the great issues of this gigantic contest.

I went a week ago to Dublin to make an appeal to Ireland. I asked Irishmen then, as I do now, on behalf of the Government and of the War Office, to enlist in and to make up the complement of an Irish Army Corps. I repeat that appeal to-night to the men of Wales. We want that. We want you to fill up the ranks of the Welsh Army Corps. We believe that the preservation of local and national ties, of the genius of a people, which has a history of its own, is not only not hostile to or inconsistent with, but, on the contrary, fosters and strengthens and stimulates the spirit of a common purpose, of a corporate brotherhood, of an underlying and binding Imperial unity throughout every section and among all ranks of the forces of the Crown.

Men of Wales, of whom I see so many thousands in this splendid gathering, let me say one last word to you. Remember your past. Think of the valleys and the mountains which in old days were the shelter and the recruiting ground of your fathers in the struggles which adorn and glorify your annals. Never has a stronger or a more compelling appeal been made to all that you as a nation honour and hold true. Be worthy of those who went before you and leave to your children the richest of all inheritances, the memory of fathers who in a great cause put self-sacrifice before ease, and honour above life itself.

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